

Meeting Minutes of the Chelsea Board of Health  
April 13, 2021

**Attendance: Names of members and Participants**

Board members, City of Chelsea staff and guests were introduced.

Board Members:

- Ola Bayode
- Corinna Culler
- Allen Jackson
- Dr. Dean Xerras

City of Chelsea Staff:

- Dr. Flor Amaya, Director of Public Health
- Paula McHatton, Public Health Nurse

**Adoption of the Minutes of the December 8 Board Meeting**

The Board adopted the minutes from the April 2021 meeting by unanimous voice vote.

**Updates – Dr. Flor Amaya, Director of Public Health**

- The **Chelsea Eats Program** launched in November with the intention of running for five months. The program recently received a \$500,000 grant from the Shah Foundation which will allow it to run through the end of June 2021. Thus far, 2,074 cards have been distributed. Preliminary results from a Harvard University analysis have found the cards are being used as intended - to purchase food.
- Local food pantries, including those operated by La Collaborativa and the Salvation Army continue to provide food to residents.
- Through April 7, Chelsea has fully vaccinated a greater percentage for residents 65-74, and 75+ than the statewide percentage. 72.3% of city residents 75+ have been vaccinated (MA rate = 68.9%) and 59.1% of residents 65-74 have been vaccinated (MA rate = 56.3%). For residents up to 0-64 years of age, Chelsea has vaccinated 12.3% (n=4,097) of this group (MA rate = 14.5%).
- Chelsea is still underperforming when looking at vaccination rates by race/ethnicity for Black and Hispanic residents. However, 28% of Asian residents have been vaccinated (MA rate = 13.7%) and 34.7% of White residents have been vaccinated (MA rate = 23.4%).
- Public school teachers and staff have been vaccinated. In person learning has resumed at Chelsea Public Schools. Approximately 310 school staff were recently vaccinated at a recent vaccination clinic for CPS staff. Other educators have been vaccinated at other area vaccination sites (ex. CVS, EBNCH sites).

**Updates – Paula McHatton, Public Health Nurse**

- One case of EBOLA was reported last month in a resident who recently traveled to Guinea and Senegal. They were monitored for 21 days, and no further symptoms developed.

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CITY OF CHELSEA

- One active TB case was reported in a 70-year-old resident who tested positive in 2015 and 2017 but was never treated. The person was treated in 2018 with one drug for 9 months. The person is currently hospitalized and is not tolerating the medication well which they will need to do before being released. Once released, McHatton will follow up with them to observe their therapy.
- There were no reported flu cases.
- Distribution of the Johnson & Johnson COVID-19 vaccine has been halted after several people nationwide developed severe reactions.
- DPH is conducting surveillance of several COVID variants including the B117 variant first identified in the UK, which is currently circulating in Chelsea. Residents are encouraged to continue to maintain physical distancing, wear masks and wash their hands regularly.
- Vaccination efforts:
  - The city has partnered with Mascon Medical and Brewster Ambulance and the State to vaccinate 512 people at a recent clinic. Another 250 people were vaccinated at Kayem Foods through this collaboration.
  - A vaccine clinic held at the senior center for essential workers vaccinated 370 people.
  - The city partnered with MGH to vaccine 15 homebound residents.
  - The FEMA vaccination clinics will be held on Friday, Saturday, and Sunday through the end of May. The most recent clinic vaccinated 927 people over the weekend.
  - St. Luke's held a vaccine clinic which vaccinated 112 people.
  - A new partnership with Tufts Health is being developed which will use a mobile van to reach out to unvaccinated residents in the Chelsea Housing Authority and will return to 260 Clark Ave to administer second doses of the Moderna vaccine to 119 residents. An event will be created around the mobile van to promote the vaccine and other services available to the community.
- COVID cases:
  - There were 17 new confirmed cases of COVID in Chelsea since Mid-March, bringing the total number of cases in the City to 8,488.
  - The percent positivity increased to 3.11% last week vs. 2.57% the previous week.
  - The incidence rate increased to 27.5/100,000 last week vs. 23.4/100,000 the previous week.

### **Other Updates**

- Emmanuel Tellez has moved out of Chelsea and resigned his position on the Board of Health. Dr. Amaya met with one candidate to fill the vacancy, Joshua Merson. Dr. Xerras worked with him at the Revere/Chelsea COVID isolation hotel. Merson is an emergency room physician's assistant at MGH and is a resident of Admiral's Hill. He will be meeting with City Manager Tom Ambrosino in the coming weeks.

### **Duties of the Boards of Health**

Corrina led a discussion of the duties and responsibilities of local boards of health as outlined by the Mass. Association of Boards of Health. The document and guidebook outline a number of board duties, and the Board started the process of identifying who (staff, the Board or other City departments) was responsible for each of the activities.

These activities include:

- Record keeping (ex. Processing of burial and death certificates, reporting to the City Council and disease reporting);
- Healthcare and disease control (ex. Disease reporting for various communicable diseases, consulting with MA DPH re: disease prevention, various disease treatment, inspecting for adequate plumbing);
- Hazardous and solid waste regulations; and
- Air and noise pollution regulations.

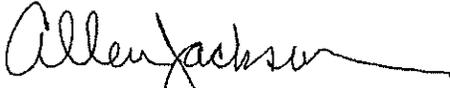
There were some items (ex. Infectious diseases at dairy farms) that will require additional research into the Massachusetts regulations for additional guidance. Corinna Culler agreed to work look up the related regulations.

Board members thought reviewing the list of responsibilities was a useful exercise in helping the Board and staff understand who is responsible for addressing the various responsibilities outlined by Mass. Association of Boards of Health in the City of Chelsea.

Board members were reminded to check their email regularly to respond to bar seating waivers.

The next meeting will be held on May 11 at 5:30pm, virtually.

The meeting adjourned at 7:01pm.

  
Allen Jackson, Clerk

5/12/2021  
Date

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